



Task Force Working Meeting #13
Thursday, December 18th, 2008
Location: Boston College High School,
150 Morrissey Boulevard
Dorchester, MA

Task Force Attendees:

Fr. George Carrigg, St. Christopher's Church
Patrick Connolly, Boston Teachers Union
Dan Driscoll, Harbor Health Services
John Lowe, McCormack Civic Association
Victoria Maguire, Graduate of UMass Boston
Paul Nutting, Columbia-Savin Hill Civic Association (CSHCA)
Orlando Perilla, Harbor Point Community Task Force (HPCTF)
Phil Strazzula, Philips Family Hospitality
Don Walsh, CSHCA/Dorchester Bay Economic Development Corporation (DBEDC), Chair

Ex-Officio Attendees:

Mike Christopher, Office of Representative Martin Walsh
Jane Lindsay, John F. Kennedy Presidential Library & Museum
Brian Maher, Boston College High School
Meagan Maloy, Office of Senator Jack Hart
Patricia McCormack, Commonwealth Museum & State Archives
Renie Smith, Office of City Council President Maureen Feeney

City of Boston Attendees:

David Black, Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc.
Jim Fitzgerald, BRA
Pat Hoey, BTB
Tad Read, BRA
Carole Schlessinger, Crosby, Schlessinger & Smallridge
Lauren Shurtleff, BRA
Skip Smallridge, Crosby, Schlessinger & Smallridge

Members of the Public:

Mallie Builon, HPCTF
Sister Elizabeth Calcagni, St. Christopher's Church
Theresa Chatman, HPCTF
Theresa Daniel, HPCTF
Greg Dicovitsky, Transit Realty Associates
Tony Disarcina, Howard/Stein-Hudson Associates
David Greaney, Synergy
Deirdre Habershaw, CSHCA
Eric Hall, Resident of Dorchester
Valerie Harms, Resident of Harbor Point
Fred Laskey, Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA)
Suzanne LeBlanc, Sovereign Bank
Paul Lynch, Ironworkers Local 7
Loretta Martin, St. Christopher's Church

Jeff McLaughlin, MWRA
Otile McManus, Corcoran Jennison Companies
Rose Morris, HPCTF
Gail Murphy, HPCTF
Natalie Nguyen, Office of City Councilor Sam Yoon
Julia O'Brien, Department of Conservation and Recreation
Delshad Osman, HPCTF
Thurman Ragland, HPCTF
Margarita Ramirez, HPCTF
Peter Rogers, Corcoran Jennison Companies
Pete Stidman, Dorchester Reporter
Louise Tardif, St. Christopher's Church
Michael Vaughan, Nauset Strategies, Inc.

Meeting Summary

On Thursday, December 18th, 2008, the thirteenth meeting of the Columbia Point Master Plan Task Force was called to order at approximately 5:35 p.m. in the Loyola Function Room at Boston College High School by Don Walsh, CSHCA/DBEDC and Chair of the Task Force.

Don welcomed the Task Force and then turned the meeting over to Carole Schlessinger, BRA Consultant. Carole quickly presented a few slides that were prepared based on feedback from the Task Force at the last meeting on December 3rd. The slides can be found on the BRA's Columbia Point Master Plan website. Carole reviewed the distance between the conceptual point tower at the MBTA site and the nearby residences in Dorchester, noting that the distance was greater than that between the Prudential Tower in Back Bay and the nearest residences. Carole also reviewed some of the potential shadow impacts from the conceptual tower.

Tad Read, BRA Senior Planner, then reviewed the City of Boston's Inclusionary Development Program (IDP), which requires that 15% of all dwelling units in housing developments containing 10 or more dwelling units be affordable to low and moderate income households.

Moving along, Chair Walsh announced that the primary purpose of tonight's meeting is to have an open discussion on a variety of topics applying to the Master Plan. The first topic is the New Street and Transportation Network.

Comments raised in response to the New Street and Transportation Network include:

- Paul Nutting, CSHCA, stated his support for the new street network but added that he is concerned about the interdependence of the network.
- Victoria Maguire, Graduate of UMass Boston, asked if the MBTA would consider adding bus service to Columbia Point based on the Master Plan. Tad responded that the MBTA reviews its routes annually and adds or cuts routes and service as needed. They also have a long-range plan, which is updated periodically and which could be updated in the future to reflect changes in Columbia Point based in the Columbia Point Master Plan.
- Dan Driscoll, Harbor Health Services, noted that he likes the new street network, and that it shows an understanding of the area and opens up some much-needed connections.

- Patricia McCormack, State Archives and Commonwealth Museum, noted that she likes the pedestrian and bicycle network, but is concerned about the adequacy of the vehicular network.
- Pat Connolly, Boston Teachers Union, asked if Sovereign Bank and DCR were willing to make the changes proposed in the Master Plan. Tad responded that the BRA and its consultants have met with both groups and will continue to do so as the Master Plan planning progresses. Each group has some concerns that will be addressed as the planning process continues.

The next topic for discussion is the Open Space Network. Only one question was raised:

- In response to a question from Chair Walsh, Tad indicated that the BRA is currently working with the Boston Parks Department to review and refine the plan.

Next, the Task Force discussed Building Heights. The following questions and comments were raised:

- Paul Nutting noted that the main concern of the community is shadow impacts, and those could be alleviated.
- John Lowe, McCormack Civic Association, noted that his neighborhood is concerned about the conceptual point tower and its impact to Sydney Street.
- Brian Maher, Boston College High School, stated that the Master Plan could take 20 years or more before it is realized, adding that many preferences could change over time.
- Patricia McCormack expressed her opinion that the tradeoffs associated with the Master Plan will make the changes worth it.
- Victoria Maguire stated that the community may allow more height at the MBTA Station if the station itself is completely reconstructed.

The fourth topic is the Mix of Uses proposed in the Master Plan. Comments are summarized below:

- In response an inquiry from Chair Walsh, Tad explained that a mix of uses within a quarter-mile of the MBTA Station is desirable in order to ensure that the neighborhood is vibrant around-the-clock. Carole added that throughout the Master Plan, a 70% residential and 30% commercial balance is the overall average. In mixed-use planning, these numbers are very close to the typical 65% residential and 35% commercial.
- Father George Carrigg, St. Christopher's Church, asked why the retail was centered around the MBTA Station and not Harbor Point. Carole indicated that it is certainly possible to include convenience retail in a limited way further down Mt. Vernon Street.
- Paul Nutting added that he has heard of a desire among community members to have active uses, such as restaurants, about the HarborWalk along the Corcoran Jennison property.

Next, the Task Force discussed the Parking and Traffic concepts included in the Master Plan. The following questions and comments were raised:

- Patricia McCormack asked if developers are bound to the parking ratios recommended in the Master Plan. Tad replied that currently, Corcoran Jennison is close to meeting the recommendations for the residential and office numbers, but added that they are still a ways off with the retail and restaurant numbers. He noted that sometimes, more parking is required initially to attract retailers, and once the development succeeds and

matures, retailers are more likely to accept fewer parking spaces as part of future development phases (such as Bayside Redevelopment Phase II).

The final discussion topic is Housing. Comments and questions raised included:

- Dan Driscoll expressed his preference that the Master Plan should recommend replicating the neighborhoods that currently surround Columbia Point in Dorchester and South Boston. He is concerned about diluting the amount of affordable housing in the area.
- Father Carrigg agreed with Dan Driscoll.
- In response to a question from John Lowe, Jim Fitzgerald, BRA Senior Planner, indicated that Mayor Thomas M. Menino desires that new developments include larger units with more bedrooms that would be more suitable for families.

At the conclusion of the discussion, Chair Walsh noted that the Task Force still has much to discuss, and will return to these topics in the near future.

Next, Tad announced that the third community-wide meeting will be held on Saturday, January 24th, from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. at Boston College High School's Bulger Theater. The first part of the meeting will include a presentation, followed by breakout discussion groups. Tad noted that advertisements will be placed in community newspapers (Dorchester Reporter, Dorchester Argus Citizen, South Boston Online, and South Boston Tribune), and a flyer will be prepared in multiple languages. The flyer will be emailed and hard copies will also be distributed.

At the conclusion of the Task Force meeting, Tad turned the meeting over to Fred Laskey of the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA), who provided the Task Force with an overview of the South Boston tunnel project. The sewer separation project will result in safer swimming at nearby beaches. The project was initiated in response to a federal court order and has been in the works for the last 10 years. Over the course of that time, the MWRA has met with the City of Boston, elected officials, and the community.

Included in the project is a new odor control facility, to be located behind the State Police barracks on Day Boulevard. The project will reach the Final Design phase in January of 2009, and construction will begin in May of 2009. The odor control facility will be a 2,900-SF brick building with a metal roof, and will use activated carbon filters to remove odors from the air. The facility will meet the standards of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and uses a technology that has been used successfully elsewhere in the country. Submerging the facility would cost the state and taxpayers an additional \$3.3 million. The federal court order stipulates that the operation must be complete by March of 2011.

After allowing a lengthy exchange between the MWRA engineers and the consultant representing Corcoran Jennison, Chair Walsh brought the discussion to a close due to the fact that the Task Force was not in a position to evaluate the scientific arguments posed by either side.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:45 p.m.